

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 CANBER 07199 070706Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 SS-15
/054 W

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R 070517Z SEP 78

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4236

UNCLAS CANBERRA 7199

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, AS

SUBJ: CIVAIR: DEPARTURE TAX

REF: A. STATE 223555, B. CANBERRA 06507

1. ARTICLE CITED REFTEL A IS CORRECT IN REPORTING THAT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS INTRODUCED AN A\$10 DEPARTURE TAX. TAX WAS INCLUDED IN FY 79 BUDGET INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT AUGUST 15; IT WAS REPORTED IN EMBASSY'S BUDGET MESSAGE, REFTEL B, IN PARA 3.

2. MAGAZINE'S CHARACTERIZATION OF TAX AS INTENDED TO AID LOCAL TOURIST INDUSTRY IS INACCURATE AND REFLECTS A LAG IN MAGAZINE'S PERCEPTION OF FLOW OF EVENTS. LIKELIHOOD OF TAX SURFACED IN PRE-BUDGET PERIOD AMONGST SPATE OF LEAKS REGARDING CONTENTS OF BUDGET. THESE INITIAL REPORTS SUGGESTED THAT TAX WOULD APPLY ONLY TO AUSTRALIANS, THEREBY ENCOURAGING THEM TO TAKE AUSTRALIAN VACATIONS WHILE NOT DISCOURAGING FOREIGN TOURISTS FROM COMING TO AUSTRALIA. WHETHER OR NOT THIS WAS EVER SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED, FOR OBVIOUS REASONS IT WAS DROPPED IN FAVOR OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY TAX APPLICABLE TO ALL TRAVELLERS.

3. WITH RESPECT TO 15 PERCENT INCREASE IN AIR NAVIGATION CHARGES, MAGAZINE ARTICLE HAS DROPPED THREE KEY WORDS, "FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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GENERAL AVIATION." EMBASSY HAS CONFIRMED FROM AIR TRANSPORT POLICY DIVISION OF DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT THAT INCREASE WILL APPLY ONLY TO GENERAL AVIATION AND THAT THERE IS NO INTENT TO INCREASE CHARGES FOR INTERNATIONAL AVIATION. REASON, OF COURSE, IS THAT FULL COST RECOVERY HAS BEEN ACHIEVED FOR INTERNATIONAL AVIATION. CATEGORY OF GENERAL AVIATION DOES, HOWEVER, INCLUDE NON-SCHEDULED CARRIERS OF ALL TYPES, INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL,

SO THAT THESE CARRIERS WILL BE AFFECTED BY INCREASE.
ALSTON

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Disposition History: n/a
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